



Your baby has been referred for a follow-up hearing test

You have just learned that your baby has been referred from the hearing screening program at your birthing hospital. The emotions can be overwhelming and you may feel at a loss for what to do when you get home! The next step is to talk with your baby's doctor and the Indiana's First Step Program to arrange for a diagnostic test to determine how well your baby hears. There are many reasons why a baby might not pass the screening test in the hospital. The 3 major reasons are noise (room or baby fussiness), "gunk" (vernex) in the ear canals, or a hearing loss. It is important to have the follow-up test before your baby is 3 months of age. Get the follow-up testing scheduled, but remember that you can still communicate with your baby in the meantime.

Remember that you are already an expert at communication! Everyone has made a funny face at a baby and watched for the smile that appears on the infant's face.

Communication is not just words. Communication is so much more!

When you talk to your baby you are "communicating"
When you touch your baby you are "communicating".
When you smile at your baby you are "communicating".
When you hold out your arms to your baby you are "communicating".
When you rock your baby you are "communicating".
When you sing to your baby you are "communicating".
When you laugh, hug or kiss your baby you are "communicating".

Simple suggestions/reminders for parents:

- Hold your baby close so that that he can see you face.
- Make eye contact often
- Reinforce his/her noises with a smile as well.
- Imitate the sounds that your baby makes.
- Make sure to talk and laugh with your baby often.
- ENJOY each moment of "communication" with your baby. You are already building "communication" skills.

In every touch, smile, word and song, you are communicating with your baby.

Adapted from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program